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Herb Plambeck

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World Plowmen

A UNITED NATIONS OF AGRICULTURE

Positive evidence of the worth and widespread interest in plowing matches is seen in the inauguration of the "World Plowing Meet" in 1953 as part of the International Matches in Canada. Plowmen were entered from Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Finland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Canada, and the United States.

Herb Plambeck of Iowa, originator of National Plowing Matches, was given the honor of firing the opening gun for the first world event. Winners of the 1953 National were the United States entries, Graeme Stewart and "Buzz" Cummins.

Many Americans saw the Canadian champion, James Eccles, win the coveted golden plow symbolic of the world title, with Odd Braut of Norway, second. All entrants used the long, narrow Scotch-type plow bottoms. The German contestants brought their own air-cooled diesel tractors. One of the British entrants had won more than 100 matches in his native country. All the world contest entrants became well acquainted and soon were close friends, exchanging views on agricultural topics and international questions — forming, in effect, a United Nations of Agriculture.

Along with the World Match competitors, the Canadian International had some 400 additional entrants, many of whom were in the horse-drawn sections, where walking plows are still used. A massive farm machinery exposition was another attraction for the 60,000 at Coburg, Ontario.

Second of the World Plowing meets was held in Ireland in 1954, and Sweden entertained the World Championship in 1955. The 1956 meet was set for England, and in 1957 the United States will be host to the world's best plowmen at the World Conservation Exposition to be held near Peebles, Ohio.

With plowmen from Europe, the United States, Canada, and possibly from Russia and Australia meeting on common soil, many observers believe the humble plow, after centuries of serving mankind, may yet be a means of accomplishing better understanding between nations.

Grace Noll Crowell's beautiful poem entitled "Plows and Plowmen" pays a fitting tribute to the sturdy men who have tilled the soil from antiquity to the twentieth century.

*So many furrows in so many lands,
So many plows beneath men's guiding hands,
And lo! the earth's surface has been tilled.
To meet the world's need, granaries are filled
With corn and wheat and rye from countless fields.
Because men plow, there are these golden yields;
Because their silver shares have pierced the sod
And they have worked together with their God.*

HERB PLAMBECK